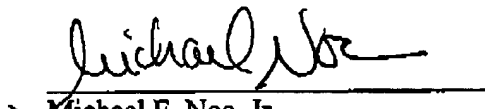


REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the allowance of Claims 7 – 13 and the suggestion offered by the Examiner to overcome the objection to Claim 5. Accordingly, Claim 5 was rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. In response to the Examiner's comments on page 5, last paragraph, of the present office action, Claim 1 was amended to specify the direction in which the tapers extend. Claim 1 and its dependent claims are now even more distinguishable over the prior art and in condition for allowance. However, Applicant still disagrees with the reasons given for the rejections of Claims 1 and 6.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance and favorable action is requested. No fees are believed to be required. However, in the event that a fee is required, please charge that fee to **Hitachi Deposit Account Number 50-2587**.

Respectfully submitted,



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